

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KUWAIT 05186 030828Z

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ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-07 USIA-15 PA-02 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 RSC-01 NASA-02 /045 W

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R 030741Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1652

UNCLAS KUWAIT 5186

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, KU

SUBJECT: G.M. MOTORAMA KUWAIT

1. ERIK NORDIN, GM MERCHANDISING MANAGER EUROPE, AFRO-MIDDLE EAST AND DIRECTOR GM MOTORAMA VISITED KUWAIT RECENTLY TO INFORM US OF PLANS TO HAVE GM MOTORAMA HERE JANUARY 8-14. EVENT HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN SCHEDULED FOR AUTUMN 1974, BUT SHIPPING DELAYS REQUIRED GM TO PLACE KUWAIT AT END RATHER THAN BEGINNING OF CIRCUIT WHICH ALSO INCLUDES BEIRUT AND THREE STOPS IN SAUDI ARABIA.

2. NORDIN SAID MOTORAMA WILL BE BIGGEST PRIVATELY SPONSORED SHOW OF ITS KIND EVER TO BE HELD IN KUWAIT. IT WILL BE HELD AT HILTON HOTEL GRAND BALLROOM AND IN ADDITION TO SEVERAL CONVENTIONAL AND SPECIAL AUTOS, EXHIBIT WILL INCLUDE MOON ROVER VEHICLE WHICH GM BUILT AS SUBCONTRACTOR TO BOEING.

3. DESPITE APPARENTLY LARGE AND IMPRESSIVE SHOW-- WHICH WE THINK WILL BE VERY SUCCESSFUL, GIVEN KUWAIT LOVE AFFAIR WITH AUTOMOBILES--NORDIN CONCERNED OVER POSSIBLE LACK OF INTEREST AMONG VIPS WHO WILL BE INVITED TO SPECIAL OPENING NIGHT SHOWING. HE THEREFORE ASKED WHETHER US ASTRONAUT COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR THAT NIGHT ONLY. NORDIN SUGGESTED EMBASSY AND USG SUPPORT IDEA IN INTEREST US EXPORT PROMOTION. WE PROMISED TO MENTION MATTER OFFICIALLY TO WASHINGTON.

4. COMMENT: THERE NO QUESTION THAT ASTRONAUT WOULD BE TREMENDOUS
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PAGE 02 KUWAIT 05186 030828Z

ATTRACTION, AND WE WOULD BE DELIGHTED TO WELCOME VISIT OF US

ASTRONAUT TO KUWAIT. WE A BIT CONCERNED, HOWEVER, IN EXPLOITING
INHERENT POPULARITY OF ASTRONAUTS FOR PRIVATE COMMERCIAL PUR-
POSE. IN ANY CASE ASSUME ASTRONAUT COULD BE SENT ONLY IF GM
WILLING PAY COSTS, AND THAT WOULD HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT WITH GM
HEADQUARTERS IN DETROIT. FYI WE SUGGESTED TO NORDIN THAT HE
HAVE HIS HEADQUARTERS TAKE INITIATIVE, BUT HE CLAIMED GM
BUREAUCRACY WOULD BE TOO SLOW. END FYI. WE NEVERTHELESS WISH
TO PLACE IDEA BEFORE DEPARTMENT AND NASA SINCE WE TOLD NORDIN
THAT WE WOULD DO SO. WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S ADVICE AS
TO WHETHER THERE ANY POSSIBILITY THAT GM REQUEST FOR ASTRONAUT
CAN BE FILLED.
STOLTZFUS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974KUWAIT05186
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740349-0991
From: KUWAIT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741265/aaaacdtg.tel
Line Count: 73
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION COME
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CollinP0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 AUG 2002 by ReddocGW>; APPROVED <13 FEB 2003 by CollinP0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: G.M. MOTORAMA KUWAIT
TAGS: BEXP, KU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005